

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAB-01 /078 W

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R 281705Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7543

INFO PANCANAL

USCINCSO

USUN NEW YORK 534

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PANAMA 2948

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PN, KN

SUBJECT: NORTH KOREAN VISIT TO PANAMA

REF: PANAMA 2617

SUMMARY: SECOND VISIT TO PANAMA BY NORTH KOREAN PARTY WITHIN A MONTH PASSED WITH EVEN LESS NOTICE THAN PREVIOUS ONE REPORTED REFTEL.

END SUMMARY

1. FOR SECOND TIME WITHIN A MONTH, PARTY OF NORTH KOREANS HAS PAID A VISIT TO PANAMA. THIS TIME, HEAD OF NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION WAS KIM YUNG SUN, VICE PRESIDENT OF KOREAN-PANAMANIAN FRIENDSHIP INSTITUTE OF NORTH KOREA. NAMES OF OTHER VISITORS WERE NOT PUBLISHED, BUT ROK EMBASSY HERE ADVISES THAT THEY WERE PARK HAR JIN, O GI BONG AND KIM DO YUM; WE HAVE NO POSITION TITLES OR OTHER IDENTIFYING DATA FOR THESE INDIVIDUALS.

2. PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY OF VISIT WAS PRESENTATION BY VISITORS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NORTH KOREAN ORDER OF LABOR AND ORDER OF RED BANNER TO DR.

ROMULO ESCOBAR BETHANCOURT, RECTOR OF UNIVERSITY OF PANAMA AND PRESIDENT OF PANAMANIAN-NORTH KOREAN FRIENDSHIP AND CULTURE INSTITUTE OF PANAMA. GROUP ALSO PRESENTED NORTH KOREAN DECORATIONS TO FOUR OTHER INDIVIDUALS: JOURNALIST MARIO AUGUSTO RODRIGUEZ; EDITOR OF NEWSPAPER "MATUTINO" RAFAEL NUNEZ ZARZAVILLA; NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION MEMBER CARLOS PEREZ HERRERA; AND SALVADOR DE LA IGLESIA. ALL OF THE DECORATED PANAMANIAN ARE OFFICERS OF PANAMANIAN-NORTH KOREAN INSTITUTE, AND SEVERAL HAVE VISITED NORTH KOREA IN RECENT YEARS.

3. ON SEPARATE SUBJECT, KOREAN EMBASSY HERE INFORMS US THAT ROK AMBASSADOR HO EUL WHANG WILL DEPART PANAMA SHORTLY FOR REASSIGNMENT TO TUNIS, AND WILL BE REPLACED HERE BY SUK SHIN CHOI, WHOM ROK EMBASSY ADVISES US RETIRED RECENTLY FROM ARMY WITH RANK OF MAJOR GENERAL.

4. COMMENT: SO FAR AS EMBASSY HAS BEEN ABLE TO LEARN, FIVE PANAMANIAN DECORATED BY THIS GROUP OF VISITORS ARE THE ONLY ONES THAT THE VISITORS SAW. ONLY PRESS COVERAGE WAS CAPTIONED PICTURE OF AWARD OF DECORATIONS IN SOCIETY PAGES OF "ESTRELLA" FOR APRIL 24, AND ANOTHER CAPTIONED PICTURE IN "CRITICA" OF APRIL 26. "MATUTINO", OF WHICH NUNEZ IS EDITOR, HAS NOT YET EVEN PUBLISHED THE PICTURE, NOR HAS MARIO AUGUSTO RODRIGUEZ MENTIONED IT IN HIS COLUMN. WE HAVE NO REASON TO HANGE OPINION REFTEL THAT GOP HAS NO INTENTION OF MAKING A CAUSE CELEBRA OF KOREA ISSUE HERE AT THIS TIME. END COMMENT.

JORDEN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** VISITS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
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**Draft Date:** 28 APR 1976  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**TAGS:** PFOR, OTRA, PN, KN, (KIM YUNG SUN)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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